

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 00201 211054Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06

SP-02 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15

STR-04 CEA-01 AGR-10 INT-05 IO-10 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15

/126 W

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R 211030Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8061

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

UNCLAS MONTEVIDEO 0201

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, UY, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE MISSION VISITS URUGUAY

REF: MVD 3474, NOVEMBER 27, 1974

1. A SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE MISSION WHICH INCLUDED THE UNDER-SECRETARIES OF FOREIGN RELATIONS (G.B. FOURIE), FINANCE (G.W.BROWNE), COMMERCE (J.F. STEYN), AND INDUSTRIES (P.F. THERON) VISITED URUGUAY BETWEEN JANUARY 11 AND 14. THE GROUP MADE NO PUBLIC COMMITMENTS AND SIGNED NO AGREEMENTS. ITS MISSION MIGHT BE DESCRIBED AS AN EFFORT TO BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH LOCAL BUSINESSMEN AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THIS OBJECTIVE WOULD SEEM TO HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AS THE VISIT RECEIVED EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE NEWSPAPER COVERAGE.

2. SOUTH AFRICA HAS RECENTLY PROVIDED TIMELY AID IN REDUCING URUGUAY'S SHORT-TERM BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT BY DEPOSITING US\$20 MILLION IN URUGUAY'S CENTRAL BANK AND PURCHASING US\$10 MILLION IN DOLLAR DENOMINATED TREASURY BONDS. (SEE REFTEL.) THIS AID WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN IMPORTS FROM
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PAGE 02 MONTEV 00201 211054Z

URUGUAY WHICH TOTALED \$2.8 MILLION THROUGH AUGUST 1974 COMPARED

WITH \$1.8 MILLION FOR ALL OF 1973, AND \$.7 MILLION IN 1972. YARNS, TEXTILES AND CERAMIC TILES ACCOUNTED FOR MOST OF THE 1974 INCREASE.

3. THE MISSION EMPHASIZED SOUTH AFRICAN RECEPTIVITY TO THIS GROWING TRADE AND DISCUSSED PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM THE LACK OF ADEQUATE AIR AND SEA TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. TECHNOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF URUGUAY'S MINERAL RESOURCES WAS OFFERED, AND IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT A VETERINARY TEAM WOULD SOON COME TO INSPECT SANITARY CONDITIONS IN URUGUAY'S MEATPACKING INDUSTRY.

4. COMMENT: SOUTH AFRICA IS NORMALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT IN BEEF AND IS NOT LIKELY TO BECOME A SIGNIFICANT BUYER; HOWEVER, IT COULD MAKE OCCASIONAL SPOT PURCHASES.

5. BOTH COUNTRIES SEEM TO BE LOOKING FOR FRIENDS, URUGUAY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD AND SOUTH AFRICA FOR SUPPORT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. THIS BUDDING RELATIONSHIP MAY THUS PROVE TO BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, TRADE VISITS, TRADE DATA
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MONTEV00201
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750022-0646
From: MONTEVIDEO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750134/aaaabdri.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MVD 3474, 75 NOVEMBER 27, 75 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2003 by BrownAM>; APPROVED <18 FEB 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE MISSION VISITS URUGUAY
TAGS: ETRD, EAID, UY, SF, (FOURIE, G B), (BROWNE, G W), (STEYN, J F), (THERON, J F)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006